

I.5 Mittagsstunde mit Corinna

- 1 *Aestus erat mediamque dies exegerat horam;*
 2 *adposui medio membra levanda toro.*
 3 *Pars adaperta fuit, pars altera clausa fenestrae;*
 4 *quale fere silvae lumen habere solent,*
 5 *qualia sublucent fugiente crepuscula Phoebo*
 6 *aut ubi nox abiit nec tamen orta dies.*
 7 *Illa verecundis lux est praebenda puellis,*
 8 *qua timidus latebras speret habere pudor.*
 9 *Ecce, Corinna venit, tunica velata recincta,*
 10 *candida dividua colla tegente coma,*

AESTUS ERAT

Übersetzungshilfen:

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|----|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 | aestus , us m. | - Sommer, Sommerhitze |
| | <i>exigere</i> 3 | - (hier:) verstreichen lassen |
| 2 | <i>adponere</i> + Dat. 3 | - ausstrecken auf |
| | <i>levare</i> 1 | - (hier:) ausruhen |
| | torus | - Sofa, Bett |
| 3 | <i>fenestra</i> | - (hier:) Fensterladen |
| | <i>adapertus</i> | - ein wenig geöffnet |
| 4 | <i>quale lumen</i> | - (hier:) solch ein Licht |
| 5 | <i>qualia crepuscula</i> | - (hier:) solch ein Zwielflicht |
| | <i>sublucere</i> 2 | - sanft strahlen |
| | <i>Phoebus fugiente</i> | - (hier:) wenn die Sonne untergeht |
| 6 | oriri | - entstehen, s. erheben, (hier:) anbrechen |
| | <i>orior, ortus sum</i> | |
| 7 | <i>verecundus</i> 3 | - schüchtern |
| 8 | <i>timidus pudor</i> | - (hier:) die furchtsame Sittsamkeit |
| | <i>latebras habere</i> | - Verstecke finden |
| 9 | <i>tunica velata recincta</i> | - gekleidet in einer Tunika ohne Gürtel |
| 10 | <i>dividua coma</i> | - das geteilte Haar, (hier:) das offene Haar |
| | tegere 3 | - |
| | <i>tego, texi, tectum</i> | |

- 11 *qualiter in thalamos famosa Semiramis isse*
 12 *dicitur et multis Lais amata viris.*
 13 *Deripui tunicam - nec multum rara nocebat;*
 14 *pugnabat tunicā sed tamen illa tegi.*
 15 *Quae cum ita pugnaret, tamquam quae vincere nollet,*
 16 *victa est non aegre prodicione sua.*
 17 *Ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros,*
 18 *in toto nusquam corpore menda fuit.*
 19 *Quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!*
 20 *Forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi!*
 21 *Quam castigato planus sub pectore venter!*
 22 *Quantum et quale latus! Quam iuvenale femur!*
 23 *Singula quid referam? Nil non laudabile vidi*
 24 *et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum.*
 25 *Cetera quis nescit? Lassi requievimus ambo.*
 26 *Proveniant medii sic mihi saepe dies!*

Übersetzungshilfen:

- 11 *qualiter* - (hier:) so wie
in thalamos ire - ins Schlafgemach gehen
Semiramis - Semiramis
 (= sagenhafte Königin von Babylon)
- 12 *Lais* - Lais
 (= berühmte Hetäre)
- 13 *deripere* - (= *de + rapere*) _____
rarus - _____, (hier: dünn)
nocere 2 - _____, (hier:) hinderlich sein
- 14 *tegi* - (hier medial zu übersetzen)
- 15 *cum* - (hier:) obwohl
tamquam quae - wie eine, die
- 16 *aegre* - mit Mühe
proditio sua - _____, (hier:) Selbstbetrug

17	velamen , <i>inis</i> n.	- _____
	<i>nostros</i>	- (= <i>meos</i>)
18	menda	- Makel
19	<i>quos umeros</i>	- welche Schultern
20	<i>papilla</i>	- (hier:) Brust
	aptus 3	- _____
21	<i>castigatus</i> 3	- straff, wohlgeformt
22	<i>quantum et quale</i>	- wie lang und schlank
	latus , <i>lateris</i> n.	- Seite, Flanke
23	referre	- berichten, (hier:) aufzählen
24	<i>usque ad</i>	- ganz nahe an
25	<i>lassus</i> 3	- müde, ermattet
	ambo	- _____
26	<i>provenire</i>	- gelingen; zuteil werden
	medius dies	- Mittag

John Barsby: Ovid, Amores I.5

The function of the first section (1-8) is to set the scene and mood of the poem. It is the hottest part of the day (aestus, 1), the time of the afternoon fiesta, and the one open shutter of Ovid's room lets in a half light resembling that of a wood or of morning or evening twilight (3-5).

In this darkened room we are aware of one piece of furniture, the divan (toro, 2), and of the relaxed figure of the poet sprawled upon it. This is an opening which would appeal to some of our tone-conscious film producers, the camera scanning the room with its patterns of light and shade and noting Ovid on his bed without yet concentrating on him. It is an arresting opening, and the poet plays upon the expectations of the reader by not revealing the purpose of the setting until line 7, where it becomes clear that a seduction is in view.

The fourth couplet thus acts as a bridge to the second section of the poem (9-16), which describes the entry of Corinna (named here for the first time in the Amores) (9-12) and the struggle over her dress (13-16). The section opens abruptly with the girl's sudden appearance (9), after which any idea that we may have gathered that it is a verecunda puella (7) who is expected is gradually dispelled, first by a process of direct description (9-10) and then by analogy or implication (11-12). The first hint in the description is the unbelted tunic (9), but we should be clear what this actually implies. A tunic was made of two pieces of cloth, a front and a back, sewn together at the side-seams and reaching down below the knees; and the effect of untying the belt or girdle which was normally worn round the waist was merely to

let the tunic hang more loosely, which would be sexually provocative only if construed as the first step towards removing the tunic altogether.

That this may here be the right interpretation is made more probable by the following line (10), where the looseness of Corinna's tunic is matched by the looseness of her hair. Roman women grew their hair long but generally wore it tied in a knot on top of their heads or in a bun at the back; and, when Corinna lets her hair down so that it divides to fall over her shoulders (dividua, 10) and covers her neck, she is inviting the deduction that she regards the occasion as an intimate one or at least as something less than formal.

The line also begins to hint at Corinna's beauty (candida), and the two ideas of this couplet, namely sexual provocation and beauty, are taken up and amplified in the next (11-12). The mention of the famous Assyrian queen, Semiramis, might suggest royal dignity, but Ovid concentrates on her beauty (formosa) with a hint of sexual promise (in thalamos); in the case of Lais, the celebrated Corinthian courtesan, who was also famed for her beauty, the emphasis is squarely on her amatory inclinations (multis amata viris), leaving us to wonder whether Corinna's favours also were widely bestowed. The historical allusions, then, far from being merely decorative or mechanical, positively contribute to the picture of Corinna's appearance and character which is being built up.

Even so we are scarcely prepared for the suddenness of Ovid's reaction: in two words he has removed the tunic (13), the action being already complete (deripui) before we realize that it is contemplated. At this point the poet gives us parenthetically a detail of Corinna's appearance which he withheld in line 9 (so as not to complete the picture too soon), that her tunic was made of some enticingly transparent material (rara).

Corinna, however, continues to struggle (note the imperfect pugnabat, 14) to cover herself with it, but ineffectually, and the ingenious word-chain (deripui tunicam, pugnabat tunica, pugnaret, ... vincere nollet, victa est, 13-16) leads to her not unwilling submission. This willingness of the girl would no doubt be Ovid's justification, if in his persona of the gay seducer he needed justification, for the unashamed physical approach to love in the poem.

The struggle over, we are ready for the third section (17-24) with its sensuous description of the beauty of Corinna's naked body. The description is daring in its wealth of detail, though not self-consciously so (Ovid is in fact quite restrained in his choice of adjectives, for example), and discretion eventually prevails, with the description cut short by the formula singula quid referam? (23).

The poet is not, however, merely a detached admirer. Beauty invites caresses (forma apta premi, 20), and the verb vidi is closely followed on its first appearance by tetigi (19) and on its second by pressi (24). It is thus obvious what the end will be. The final couplet (25-6) is at once the climax and the tail-piece of the poem. The details of the love-making are again discreetly cut short by a formula (cetera quis nescit?), but the fact that intercourse has taken place is quite clearly conveyed by the words lassus and requievimus (25), with ambo repeating the idea of mutual pleasure already implicit in the girl's willingness to submit (16). The technique is exactly that of the film, which enjoys certain amount of nakedness and preliminary love-play but then cuts to the shot of the couple relaxed in bed after the action is over.

The poem then ends fittingly with the wish expressed in the last line (26), which conveys both the pleasure of the experience and the anticipation of its repetition.